

Real Earnings – February 2008

Every month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases data on real earnings for production or nonsupervisory workers in the private sector. Real earnings reflect the value of workers' paychecks adjusted for inflation. They indicate whether or not wage increases have actually translated into an improved standard of living.

Real Earnings Stats at a Glance

Year	January Average Hourly Earnings, Private Sector	January Earnings Adjusted for Inflation (January 2008 dollars)
2002	\$14.76	\$17.70
2003	\$15.21	\$17.74
2004	\$15.50	\$17.76
2005	\$15.91	\$17.69
2006	\$16.43	\$17.54
2007	\$17.10	\$17.92
2008	\$17.75	\$17.75

- Average hourly earnings of production/nonsupervisory workers in the private sector were \$17.75 in January (seasonally adjusted). Hourly pay for manufacturing workers averaged \$17.55.
- The slowing economy and inflation led real average weekly earnings to fall .5 percent in January despite a small increase in average hourly earnings.
- Over the month, increased earnings for manufacturing workers meant a 12 cent increase in inflation adjusted hourly earnings. However, inflation-adjusted earnings in the manufacturing sector are still 25 cents behind their January 2007 levels, and 79 cents below the most recent high in November 2003.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics report can be found at:
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/realer.pdf>

Next release: March 14, 2008

UAW Research Department
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